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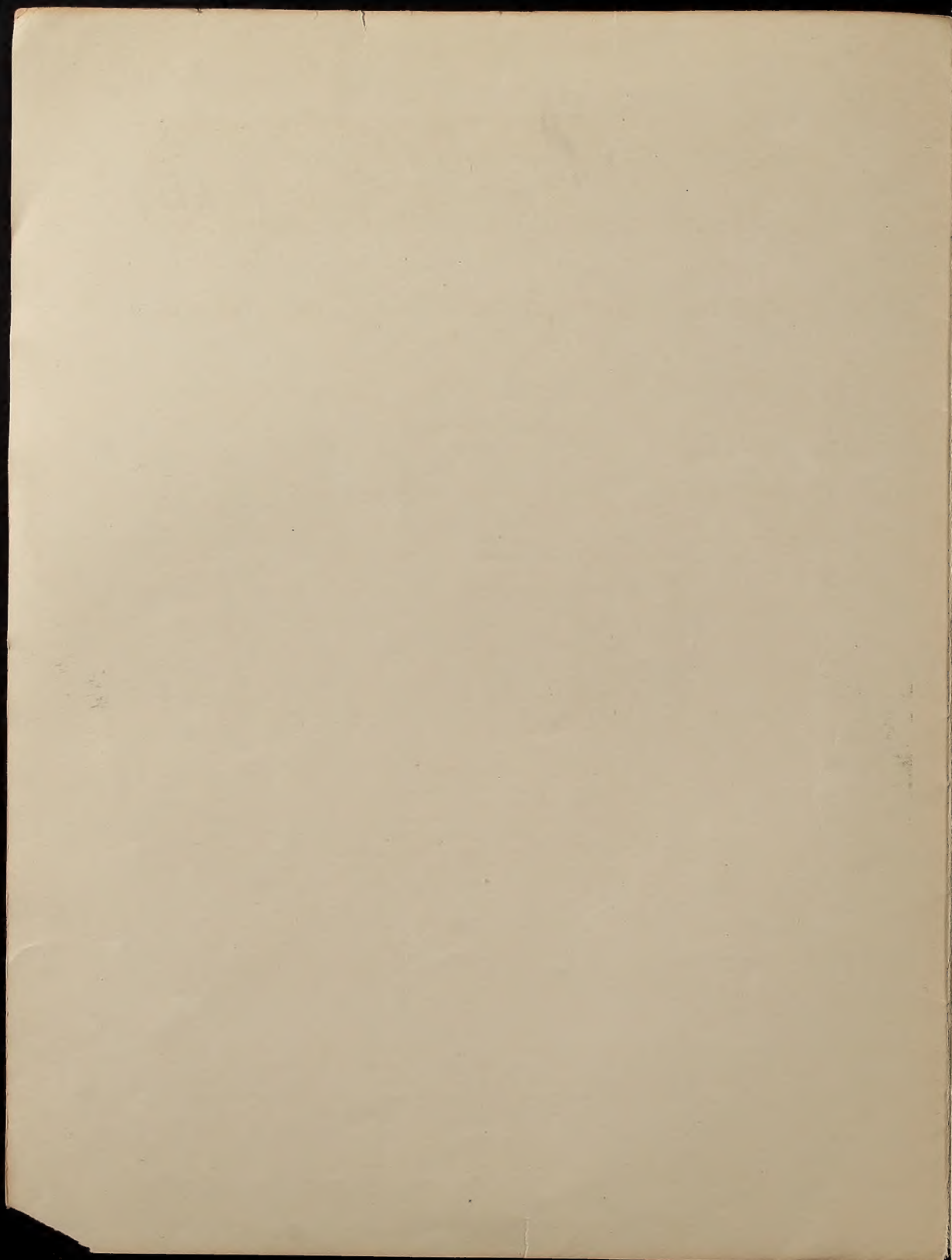
Venetian Gondola Song,
(A Minor), No. 3,
Op. 62, No. 5

— MENDELSSOHN

GRADE II—B

No. 38







VENETIAN GONDOLA SONG, No. 3, IN A MINOR. Op. 62, No. 5

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH—JACOB LUDWIG FELIX MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY.

Born at Hamburg, February 3d, 1809.

Died at Leipsic, November 4th, 1847.

MENDELSSOHN was of Jewish extraction, being the grandson of Moses Mendelssohn, the distinguished Jewish philosopher. He knew little of the cares and vexations of life, having been surrounded from his boyhood with all that wealth and refinement could procure. The world owes a great debt of gratitude to this distinguished musician, for besides the legacy of beautiful music which he bequeathed to it, he stimulated and aroused interest in the works of the great Sebastian Bach, by producing his "Passion Music," at Berlin, in 1829; he founded the Leipsic Conservatory of Music, and he was instrumental in bringing several noted musicians to the notice of the world, notably Robert Schumann.

His talent for music developed itself at a very early age, and he was given the benefit of the best instruction which an artistic home and wealthy surroundings could procure. He was the first director of the Leipsic Conservatory of Music, and in 1840, he was appointed director of the department of music of the Academy of Fine Arts at Berlin, founded by the King of Prussia. He traveled extensively on journeys connected with his art, notably to England, where he was beloved and appreciated. He was the personal friend of Goethe and of Queen Victoria of England, who held him in high regard.

He had great facility in composition, and his musical ideas are characterized by elegance and refinement, if they are not always of a profound depth. Symphonies, Operas, Oratorios, Overtures and works for various instruments, flowed from his pen. Among these works must be mentioned the "Midsummer Night's Dream" overture, the oratorio of "Elijah," and the "Songs Without Words" for the piano. These latter compositions have made his name a household word throughout the world; they are, as their names indicate, songs without words; they show a great mastery of form and are for the most part very refined and lovely in their contents. The oratorio of "Elijah" is, with the possible exception of Handel's "Messiah," the greatest Oratorio ever written.

FORM AND STRUCTURE.—The working form of the measure is 4, 5, 6-1, 2, 3. Consequently, in referring to the measures by number, it will always be necessary to look back of the number given, and see if any part of the working form of the measure appears in the preceding measure. Of course, the chief accent will be in the measure which is numbered for reference. It is possible, and very frequently happens, that an actual part of a measure is before the measure bar in the form of an upbeat.

The first four measures of this piece are introductory. This gives us occasion to say that while we speak of four measures, here only the first half of the fourth measure, as it appears in print, belongs to the introduction. As a matter of fact, the piece begins on an incomplete measure, then there are three complete measures, and a part of the fourth measure. The incomplete measure at the beginning, and the part

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of the fourth measure used make up the four complete measures, as we have to understand probably two eighth-rests in the first measure in addition to the eighth note there written. In that way we get the measure complete. Notice the motive in the second measure, which is repeated in the third and fourth measures on different parts of the measures.

The form of the piece is three-part song form. The main theme begins with measure 5 (remember that the first half of measure 4 is included in this enumeration), and the period closes in measure 12, being thus eight measures long. The little motive from the introduction is then interpolated on the second half of measure 12 and the first half of measure 13. The opening theme of the first part is then repeated, closing in measure 21. The second part of the song form begins on the second half of measure 21, and consists of a four-measure phrase, ending in measure 23. This is extended six measures. The main theme again commences in measure 23, but very much shortened, in fact, only a reference is made to it. Then the middle theme together with the extension, is repeated and embellished, or, as we should properly say, *figured*. Then the same reference to the main theme comes in a second time. The piece could have stopped with measure 49, but the composer chose to repeat the phrase beginning in measure 21, extending it by means of figuration until the piece finally closes in measure 59. In accordance with our principal of reducing everything, as far as possible, to some fundamental form, we have called this piece a song form in three parts. It is, however, very capricious in character, and the song form consists of the first theme, then the second theme, and finally the third theme in measure 32. The second and third themes can then be regarded as repeated, a procedure which is often found in the song form. It is followed by a reference to the main theme and the *coda*.

THE POETIC IDEA.—The remarks which we made in connection with the G minor Gondola-Song would very largely apply here. The form of the accompaniment is different, but its suggestiveness is similar to that in the other piece. Read over the remarks in connection with the other piece, and they will serve for this.

HOW TO STUDY.—In order to master the accompaniment, practice the following exercise: Play the second, third and fourth eighths in the first measure both forward and backward. Change also the order in which they come, playing E-A with the fifth finger, then A-C with the first and second fingers. Practice these exercises, holding down as many notes as you can, all of them, if possible. Where the skip is wider, as on the second half of measure 4, play that passage very many times in succession and change, too, the order of the notes somewhat. In this way work through the accompaniment, and get it so you can play it with perfect facility. Next, study the melody. Notice the tied notes in the sixth measure. Notice also the *tirata* in measure 7, the first note, D#, being played exactly when the left hand note of the accompaniment is played. The D# is then held while the three eighths on the second half of the measure are played. To get the octave passage in the right hand, beginning with measure 13, break the notes there found both upward and downward, preserving the fingering used when the notes are struck together. The little imitation occurring in the right hand part of measure 19 requires that the upper note, G, be carefully held down while the thumb is playing its notes. The grace-notes in measures 22 and 24 are played on their beat as shown at the bottom of the page. The part in measures 35 to 43 will help you get measures 21 to 29. The figured work beginning in measure 53 can be practiced with the device of alternating long and short notes. Finally, study this piece with reference to the marks of expression, slurs, etc., and be sure that the melody of the piece is given a very expressive rendition. Even the octave passages beginning in measure 13 are played *pp*, and the bass is marked to be played always *pp*. The marks of expression you are thoroughly familiar with. Carefully attend to the pedaling as indicated.

VENETIAN GONDOLA SONG, NO. 3.

Edited and Annotated by Frederic Lillibridge.

Mendelssohn, Op. 62, No. 5.

Andante con moto. ♩ 144.

pp ff pp

sempre pp il Basso

a) dim.

ff pp

p 24

cresc. scen.

28 al

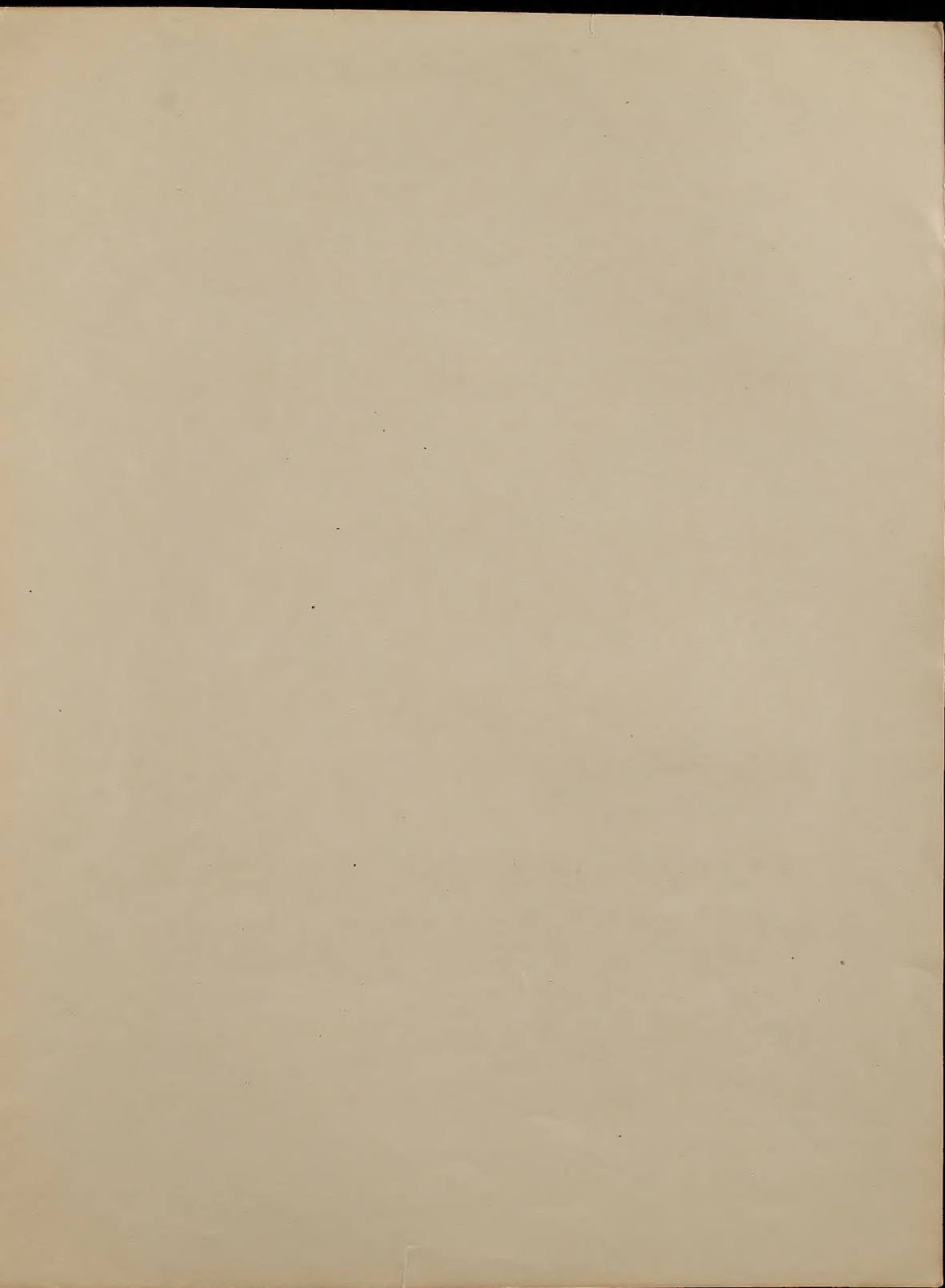
a) Execution b) Execution

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Venetian Gondola Song, No. 1.—2.

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